



National Centre of Biography News

May 2025

The NCB News is the monthly newsletter of the National Centre of Biography. Got biographical news to share? Send us an email at ncb@anu.edu.au.



The Australian Crowd, by Stephen Baxter (2014)

Biography in Peru



NCB director Professor Melanie Nolan has been talking biography in Lima, Peru.

On Wednesday 7 May she gave a talk on 'The role of biographies in history' to an interdisciplinary group, the Departamento de Humanidades (Department of Humanities) at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (Pontifical Catholic University of Peru). Two literary scholars, Francesca Denegri and Daniella Wurst, were commentators.

Melanie spoke about the wider changes in the landscape in which historians write biography, and of course discussed concise biography and the ADB. You can watch the recording [online](#) if you want to hear more.

News & notices



Meet the author

As part of the ANU/Canberra Times 'Meet the author' series, on Wednesday 14 May Emeritus Professor Judith Brett will be in conversation with Virginia Haussegger on her new biography *Fearless Beatrice Faust: Sex, Feminism and Body Politics* (Text Publishing, 2025). [Register](#) to attend now.



ANU Archives lecture 2025

This year's annual ANU Archives Lecture will be given by Professor Brenda L. Croft (ANU) on 'The long journeys of "Handsome" Joe Croft, father and son.' In this talk Brenda will draw on her engagement with archives and understanding of personal and family history in her story of the long journeys of 'Handsome' Joe Croft—the sobriquet shared by her grandfather and father. Wednesday 28 May, 5.30-7pm. Register to attend [here](#).



Biography workshop

On Thursday 29 May Associate Professor Rebe Taylor (UTAS) will present on 'Women at the edge of the world: human extinction discourse history and historiography.' Check the [event page](#) for more details.

*Please note this workshop will be held online only

Read, listen, learn



She Shapes History

Congratulations to friend of the NCB, Sita Sergeant, on the publication of *She Shapes History: City Walks and Stories About Great Australian Women* (Hardie Grant, 2025). In this travel guide Sita shares stories of Australian women from across the country. If you're in Canberra, Sydney or Melbourne, check out her [tour company](#) of the same name, too!



'We are a farming class'

A reminder that Dr Peter Woodley's debut book, *'We are a farming class': Dubbo's hinterland, 1870-1950*, is out now with ANU Press. You can download or order a copy via the [website](#).



The Wild Australia Show

[Forthcoming](#) with ANU Press is *The Wild Australia Show: The Story of an Aboriginal Performance Troupe and its Afterlives*. While you wait for its release, you can read an [essay](#) written by the book's authors for the *Indigenous Australian Dictionary of Biography* on the same topic.



Biography podcast

In the latest episode of *Biographers in Conversation*, Professor Kate Fullagar discusses the choices she made while crafting *Bennelong & Phillip: A History Unravelling* with NCB visitor Dr Gabriella Kelly-Davies. [Listen](#) now.



Join us on Bluesky!

Did you know the ADB is now on Bluesky?
Follow us at [@ausdictionarybiog.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/ausdictionarybiog.bsky.social)

ADB feature entry

Each month we highlight a new addition to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. This month it's children's author and artist, Sheila Hawkins (1905-1999).

Alongside having a fascinating career, Hawkins was a real personality: 'eccentric, chronically honest, and, to those who could cope with that honesty, a deeply loyal friend.'

Read the entry, written by Dr Emily Gallagher, [online](#) now.



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